



HARROW STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BOARD

Compact – Commissioning and Funding Code

23rd September 2013

Introduction

The original Compact was an agreement between the government and the voluntary and community sector, which set out key principles and established a way of working that improved their relationship for mutual advantage. It promoted equality, ensured better involvement in delivering services, and strengthened independence. It was made in November 1998, and renewed in 2010.

Following the national Compact, most areas in England developed a local Compact, which interprets the principles set out in the Compact to reflect local need and determination

In Harrow, the Compact was developed in 2004. It consisted of an overarching document supported by 5 Codes concerned with Disability, Black and Minority Ethnic issues, Consultation, Volunteering and Funding. Our Compact is not a legally binding document or contract although a Compact in another Borough has been accorded the status of a “Document of Intent” in a High Court ruling which enables Judicial Review proceedings to be brought if it is breached. It is a mutual agreement between those who decide to endorse its principles and commitments to action. Its authority derives mainly from the respect accorded to it by the partners and the extent to which it influences future decision-making and development. It is intended to be of both practical and symbolic significance. It is the intention of those who have collaborated in producing it that it should have an authoritative focus in promoting good quality working relationships between the partners.

Work to revise the Codes began in 2010 and four of the five codes were quickly agreed. The fifth, relating to Funding, has proved to be more difficult not least due to changes in the way the Council and other bodies contract with and fund voluntary and community organisations. However, a new draft Commission and Funding Code is now ready for the Board’s consideration.

The draft is the product of work with voluntary and community sector representatives and officers from across the Council but most notably from the Procurement Team in the Resources Directorate. The draft brings the Compact up to date and recognises the move towards commissioning more services from voluntary and community sector organisations and the consequent reduction in the significance of the grants process. The draft code does, however, address both funding methods.

Proposed Action

That the draft Commissioning and Funding Code is approved as part of the updated Compact.